

# SICC MEETING MINUTES

## Truman Building, Room 400

### April 11, 2008

#### Members Present

Lisa Robbins  
Joyce Jackman  
Melinda Sanders  
Joyce Sims

Tec Chapman  
Jodi Arnold  
Amy Kessel  
Carolyn Stemmons

Wendy Witcig  
Leslie Elpers  
Carissa Mattern

#### Members Not Present

Kim Oligschlaeger  
Senator Scott Rupp

Emily Pohlsander  
Dr. Patsy Carter

Linda Bohrer  
Paula Neese

#### DESE Staff Present

Dale Carlson  
CJ Hubbard

Mary Corey

Judy Goans

To review copies of handouts referenced in the minutes below, go to the following website: <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/SICCpage.html> and click on "Handouts" for the April 11, 2008 meeting.

**Call to Order, Welcome and Introductions** – Lisa Robbins brought the meeting to order at 8:45. Introductions of the group were made. New parent member, Emily Pohlsander, has been appointed by the governor's office but could not attend the meeting today. Tec Chapman was also recognized on receiving his official appointment from the governor's office.

**Approval of the SICC Minutes** – Lisa Robbins asked for a motion to accept the minutes from the January meeting, with changes. A motion to accept the minutes, with changes, was made by Wendy Witcig and seconded by Leslie Elpers. Motion passed.

**Financial Update** – Dale Carlson reported that the "A" report does not show any areas for concern. At the bottom of the report Dale pointed out some of the areas of comparison he has added to the report to compare past years figures. He indicated that DESE is trying to do an annual draw down against the Family Cost Participation and insurance dollars. The first drawn down for the year is usually done in January or February because the new dollars from insurance billing begins to flow in as of January 31<sup>st</sup>. At this point, DESE has spent about 20 million dollars and we will come close to the budgeted amount of 27 million dollars at the rate we are spending. The March provider mileage number is low, but it will probably be adjusted. In the "B" report we have averaged about 1.5 million per month in direct services compared to the prior year of 1.2 million. Our 12 month average of 1.75 million is to be expected due to the increased provider rates but also because we are seeing more kids which makes our cost go

upward, which is what we expected. The child count numbers are trending upward which is what we want also. There is a month by month comparison for the prior year also on this report. Generally, our child claim numbers are up compared to the prior year. There are no concerns on the money side and we have a general budget for 09 that is looking pretty solid, in light of increased cost in the program.

**Data Report** – Mary Corey presented the report on First Steps Region on State Performance Plan Indicators, which is required in conjunction with the APR and the SPP. DESE has to report on the Early Intervention agencies in the state against the annual performance report and the targets. The report is divided by each SPOE region and by DMH. Mary stated that Indicator 3 is not on this report because DESE isn't required to publicly report this information yet as we do not have the targets set. Indicator 1 data will be more accurate in the next APR because the information will be available from the webSPOE system. This report is posted to the First Steps website which fulfills our requirement for public reporting. Mary also announced that Bill Connelly is no longer with the department so any questions can be directed to her at DESE.

**Compliance Update** – CJ Hubbard announced that the compliance section has completed their annual and cyclical monitoring for the year. All 10 SPOE offices and 12 DMH offices were monitored for their annual review. From the monitoring there were 5 SPOE offices that had corrective action plans as well as 5 DMH centers. DESE will be pulling data in the very near future for the DMH corrective action plans to make sure that they are now at least 80% compliant with their transition timelines. Knowing that there are some changes in the works for DMH, we are trying to obtain the information and get their corrective action plans cleared as soon as possible. OSEP gives us up to 12 months after we send the final letters out to the SPOE and DMH regional centers to have them in compliance. The annual reports and letters went out in February. In the cyclical monitoring, 5 SPOE and 5 DMH offices were monitored and two of the 5 SPOE offices had a corrective action plan. DESE anticipates that these will not be difficult for the offices to correct. DESE will check again in 6 months to make sure that progress is being made on the corrective plans. Our cyclical monitoring was done by visiting 1 SPOE office per month from October to March. DESE informed the SPOE directors yesterday that we have changed our schedule for monitoring for the 2009 year. DESE will be consolidating the visits to the SPOE offices so that we will only be going out into the field on 3 different occasions.

**DESE Update** – Joyce Jackman and Tec Chapman discussed the transfer of DMH service coordination to DESE. This transfer places all service coordination at the SPOE offices and supports the DMH proposal to restructure case management at the regional centers. DESE initiated conversations with DMH regarding the benefits of consolidating service coordination at the SPOE. DMH and DESE worked with the governor's office and the Office of Administration to structure the transfer of responsibility and to include the financial components in the state's 2009 budget. The plan to phase out DMH service coordination was announced to DMH staff and the SPOE directors on March 18, 2008. DMH will continue to provide service coordination to any child who will age out of the program between now and September 7, 2008 (approximately 412 children). Regional Center staff will work with the SPOE offices to transfer families at a natural point in their program such as the 6-month or annual review meeting. Tec stated that the pilot project in Region 3 with the Kirksville Regional Center started last fall and went very smoothly. A joint letter from Heidi Atkins Lieberman, Assistant Commissioner of Special Education, and Bernard Simons, Director of the Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities will be sent to notify First Steps families involved in the transfer after the transfer amendment to the state's budget clears the joint conference committee of the General Assembly. DMH will continue to be an active partner with the First Steps program. Some of the regional DMH office staff will continue, and be encouraged, to participate with the RICC in their

area. DMH will send out a letter to let their staff know that they can still attend these meetings. Eligibility for division services is not changing for DMH services because of this change in service coordination responsibilities. Tec will continue on the SICC. There will be no layoffs of DMH staff because of this transfer of responsibility. Joyce has meetings scheduled with each of the SPOE contractors to address the individual impact to the SPOE operation as a result of this change.

In addition, the Phase 1 SPOE contracts will enter their final renewal on July 1, 2008. In talking with OA, DESE has decided to rebid all 10 regions at the same time; therefore, the Phase II contracts will be shortened by 1 year. That means when we send out the renewals on July 1 of 2008 everyone in the state will be on the last year of their current contract. Joyce will be working with OA to craft the new bid and have it ready for posting to the public for bid by October 1, 2008, at the latest. The review process may take longer because we are doing all 10 regions. We need to have the review process completed and bids awarded by February 2009 so that contractors will have sufficient time to prepare for implementation on July 1, 2009. The CFO contract ends on February 1, 2010 which will be the next major program bid opportunity. During visits with the current contractors regarding amendments for the DMH transfer Joyce is asking for suggestions regarding changes or improvements for the next SPOE RFP. The SPOE directors have also given Joyce a list of things that they need.

**Robin McWilliam** – Joyce reported that for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year over 100 people attended the Robin McWilliam training. The training was held March 17 and 18 in Branson, MO and was well received by all who attended. At this training 60 providers participated as team members. Dr. McWilliam talked about effective home visits and the role for providers who do not have a direct service delivery role with the family. The area directors plan to imbed these concepts into their trainings in order to help SPOE offices and providers as they try to implement the primary provider concept. Robin will be hosting a weeklong training in Nashville in August for a group of people who will be trained in the Routine Based Interview (RBI) process. All five of our area directors have been accepted to attend the training. After attending this program they will be trained and ready to assist the program with the RBI process.

**Autism Training** - We continue to work closely with the Thompson Center regarding early intervention services and supports to families of children with autism. The area directors will be attending a training developed by the Central Missouri Rapid Response Initiative on understanding autism in young children and screening for autism spectrum disorders. They will then conduct trainings regionally for First Steps providers using these materials.

**Missouri First Steps First Year Report** - The new fiscal year 2007 Annual Report was distributed to the SPOE offices and the SICC members.

**Transition** – Joyce stated that DESE is continuing to work on improving understanding and implementation of federal requirements associated with transition of children from Part C to Part B of IDEA. This was an identified area of concern by OSEP in last year's APR/SPP review. The area directors have a new Transition Workshop with information addressing both the Part B (school district) and Part C (First Steps) responsibilities during the transition period. All SPOE regions will be attending this training, as well as, school district early childhood special education staff. In addition, the state of Indiana gave Missouri approval to use their video which explains to parents the transition process. The video shows the family involved in Part C and then moving to Part B in the school district. The DVD is 14 minutes long and our telecommunications department is in the process of adjusting the video to accommodate the Missouri specific information. We expect to produce seven to eight thousand DVDs. The DVDs will be a gift

from the state to our First Steps families. Families may keep the DVD or choose to donate it back to the program as they exit. DESE is also working with MPACT to develop a written transition pamphlet that can accompany the DVD. This project has been funding through the State Improvement Grant (SIG).

#### **SPOE Operations –**

- SPOE Region 2 – Juli Hillyer reported that they hope to have their primary service provider pilot team up and going this week or next. They plan to start with 2 families in the beginning and take it slow. Their office also completed their compliance monitoring review in March and they received a very good review with one small area with a corrective action plan to work on. They also received a lot of good feedback from DESE. They will also begin working on serving the kids they will be receiving from DMH.
- SPOE Region 1 – Margaret Pickett reported that their office has started an autism spectrum support group to exchange information on autism. The group includes a pediatric neurologist, pediatrician, and March Morrison. Their office also met recently with the medical staff of the city clinic that serves many children. They shared referral information and discussed the First Steps philosophy. Their compliance review was just completed and they received a good review and good feedback. They also have a small corrective action plan issue to work on. Their RICC is working on the draft contract for the child find coordinator. This draft will be presented to the RICC as a whole for their approval.
- SPOE Region 3 – Karen Jacobi reported that their team from the hospital in Kirksville attended the Robin McWilliam training in Branson and they are gearing up for their pilot project. They also took another team from the east side of their region to the training but they are not involved in the pilot project. They will be hiring one new service coordinator on the east side to replace the DMH service coordinator.
- SPOE Region 4 - Kathy Daulton reported that they have one team working with the primary service provider model to be in their trial project. Their office is also working on their corrective action plan and meeting 6 month and transition timelines. They are dealing with the DMH transition and working on provider enrollment because providers are already getting full for the summer. Some of the smaller country hospitals have expressed an interest in being a provider.
- SPOE Region 5 – Jana Robinson reported that they are gearing up to take over the DMH caseload which could be as many as 150-200 kids. Their office is fully staffed with no staff turnover since last fall. They are just starting to talk with providers regarding the team model and they are working with their area director to set up a training with their providers. They are focusing a lot on child find and have been flooded with referrals
- SPOE Region 6 – Niki Clover stated that they are working on the beginning stages of their primary service provider team and they are continuing discussions with the Special Learning Center. They have been working on child find and their intake caseload has been high. Their office is also gearing up for changes with the takeover of the DMH kids. Niki and Pam Thomas gave a presentation to a higher education class of Physical Therapy students on First Steps. Their office has also been working with Pam on transition workshops.
- SPOE Region 7 – Sarah Parker stated that they are working on how they can take of the DMH kids smoothly. They currently have 1 new provider and 3 that are in the enrollment process. They have met with their RICC and they are working hard on some new ideas for child find. Recently they met with an advertising agency that will be producing some radio and television spots for First Steps in their region.

## **RICC Reports**

- Region 1 RICC reported that they have an opening for a parent member on their council. The child find committee has been busy with activities across their region. The executive committee is continuing to work on finalizing the Child Find Coordinator consultant position. Work continues to be done on the First Steps DVD to be used at presentations. The group is working on helping families with the transition process from Part C to Part B.
- Region 3 RICC currently has 2 parent and 1 provider representative opening on their council. They have participated in several public awareness events throughout their community. Several new providers have enrolled with the SPOE office.
- Region 5 RICC continues to look to fill several Member At Large positions. Referrals are continuing to come in from a variety of sources and they are continuing to get better information about First Steps to area physicians. They will participate in several health and family fairs throughout their area to promote First Steps. A “tip of the month” was created for providers to better understand how First Steps works.
- Region 6 RICC reported that they are in need of 3 parents for their RICC. Their RICC has created a flyer to post in physician and community agency offices to assist with child find. The CFO assisted their RICC with a provider survey. The providers completed it online and the CFO tallied the results. Provider recruitment letters were sent to providers in Randolph County.
- Region 7 RICC reported that they met for the first time this year on April 1<sup>st</sup> and discussed and planned activities for the upcoming year. Their RICC is planning transition meetings for families transitioning from Part C to Part B. They are currently looking for a replacement for their RICC chairperson.
- Region 10 RICC reported that they are experiencing a lot of challenges due to the extreme rural areas regarding provider recruitment and child find. They now are moving ahead and have their by-laws completed and approved.

**Member Issues** – The group discussed the child find issue and how they can help people become more aware of First Steps. It was suggested that the SPOE offices find out how they their agency can be listed in the 211 system. The 211 system is a statewide system and 211 is the number that you dial to receive public service information. You will be directed to a live person who will help you get the support and information that you need for your area. According to their website, the system should be available for the entire state by April of 2008. The system is only as good as the agencies and people who propagate the data base. Judy Goans will research how the SPOE offices can sign up for this system.

**Reports from subcommittees** – A subcommittee was formed to look at the council’s limited parent involvement and to explore ideas on how we can build capacity for parent involvement. Currently, we do not have a co-chairperson from the parent membership. The sub-committee asked Lisa Robins to consider staying on as the co-chair for one additional year. Lisa stated that she would be willing to serve one more year. The nominating committee also met and asked Wendy Witcig if she would consider being the provider nominee for co-chair. A question was asked if we need to change the by-laws or do we need to agree to amend this situation. The council does not want to take lightly the process of amending the by-laws. It was suggested that Joyce speak to Cynthia Quetsch, Legal Counsel, and ask for her guidance on this matter. Today we can nominate to fill the provider role but the question we need to ask our legal counsel is can we ask Lisa to stay on for another year. If we find out it just takes a motion and a vote we could do it by e-mail. The past chairperson will serve on the executive committee.

Lisa Robbins nominated Wendy Witcig as the provider nominee for the council co-chair position and asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. There were no other nominations. Lisa asked for a vote and all were in favor with no one opposed. Wendy will begin to serve in this capacity in July.

Tec Chapman made a motion to propose, on a temporary basis, to allow the immediate past co-chair to remain as a co-chair of the SICC up until 1 year or until a parent has been appointed and willing to serve in that role, pending legal counsel clarification. Joyce Jackman seconded the motion. Lisa asked for any discussion. Lisa asked for a vote and all were in favor with no one opposing. Lisa abstained. Carissa will reconsider taking on the role of co-chair in the fall. It was discussed and decided that a committee needed to be appointed to discuss the various questions regarding by-law change questions. Tec, Wendy, Joyce, and Lisa agreed to serve on this committee. Joyce will talk to Cynthia before the conference call with the by-laws committee. Joyce will also draft a document that talks about the council and the role of the council for our by-laws. The committee will return to the council in July with an itemized list of possible by-law changes.

A question was asked as to whether a parent could have an alternate and they were told that a parent can have an alternate but it should be another parent. DESE does not reimburse an alternate to attend the meeting if the main person can attend. It was suggested that we add a comment in the next Parent Connection newsletter that we need nominations for the SICC and also add something to our webpage.

Joyce stated that she would draft a SELS message to request nominations to the SICC and then post it to our website and ask Headstart and the Department of Health to post it to their websites as well.

Lisa asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joyce Jackman made the motion and Joyce Sims seconded the motion. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 1:00.